



COVID-19 (nCorona) Virus Outbreak Control and Prevention State Cell

Health & Family Welfare Department

Government of Kerala

ADVISORY FOR SAFE CONDUCT OF FESTIVALS IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID 19

N0- 3/31/F2/H&FWD- 4th January 2021.

The festivals, fairs, rallies, exhibitions, cultural functions, processions, plays and concerts associated with these festivities are mass events. If strict mitigation measures are not adopted, festivals can turn out to be super spreading events. COVID 19 transmission dynamics is closely related to the 3 Cs

1. **CLOSED SPACES** with poor airflow.
2. **CROWDED PLACES.**
3. **CLOSE CONTACT settings** with face to face contact.

Preventive measures should be put in place during festivals to ensure that the 3Cs which are closely related to COVID 19 transmission dynamics gets addressed.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection, it is important to ensure that standard operating procedures are ensured during festivals. The manifest of the festivals which include the dates, expected number of people, measures taken to ensure prevention of spread of infection as per the state directive, timings of special functions which coincide with auspicious moments etc should be shared with the local health authorities. Permission for the SOP should be obtained from the local health authorities.

1. No festival related events should be conducted in containment zones.
2. Persons above 65 years of age, persons with co-morbidities, pregnant woman and children below 10 years of age are advised against taking part in festivals.
3. Universal masking, physical distancing [minimum 1 metre between devotees] and hand hygiene should be ensured at festival site. Mask should be worn by everyone including priests.

4. All efforts should be made by festival authorities to ensure that crowding do not occur on festival grounds or inside premises of shrines. If sanctum sanctorum is a closed space without adequate cross ventilation, only a minimum of devotees should be permitted at a time to sanctum sanctorum.
5. Authorities should ensure that practice of dining together during festival should not be permitted. If dining together is part of temple custom and if it is unavoidable then adequate physical distancing should be ensured while having food. Staggered timing and seating should be done.
6. Symptom screening should be performed at entry point. Symptomatic persons should not be permitted. Priests also should undergo symptom screening.
7. Individuals should always maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet. Organizers should establish a system of physical distancing through floor drawings and barriers.
8. Practice frequent hand hygiene with soap/sanitizers immediately after touching any surface or persons. It is advised not to touch any frequently touched surface as far as possible.
9. Disinfection of all frequently touched surfaces with 1% hypochlorite solution must be performed regularly at least once in two hours.
10. All persons attending the festival should self-monitor their health for development of symptoms for next 14 days. Report any symptoms at the earliest to DISHA 1056.
11. Details of those who attend the festival with mobile number should be recorded.
12. Some administrative requirements are essential for the safe conduct of festivals. Festival planners and administrators should identify spatial boundaries and prepare a detailed site plan which would facilitate compliance with symptom screening, physical distancing, hand sanitization etc. A plan should be prepared well in advance about conduct of each activity (religious places, rallies, processions, cultural shows, fairs etc.), with all relevant stakeholders including event organizers, business owners, market associations, etc.
13. In case of events that run for days or weeks, the crowd density doesn't remain the same throughout and usually peaks around certain hours of the day and some previously known auspicious days. Planning for the event should specifically factor this so that crowds are regulated and managed to ensure physical distance and frequent sanitization,
14. In case of rallies and processions, route planning, identification of immersion sites, ensuring cap on numbers, physical distancing etc. must be planned beforehand and measures for enforcement outlined

15. Events planned to last for many days or weeks such as exhibitions, fairs, puja pandals, or concerts and plays would have to have adequate measures to ensure a cap on physical numbers. Staggered timings and restricted entry may be considered and volunteers should be appropriately stationed to ensure symptom screening, physical distancing and wearing of masks.
16. Preferably multiple and separate entry and exits for visitors shall be ensured. The structure/space/venue for the event must also ensure adequate natural cross-ventilation,
17. Entrances to have mandatory hand hygiene and symptom screening provisions. Only those staff and visitors who are free of symptoms shall be allowed inside the venue. Anyone found symptomatic during screening should be politely refused entry and advised to seek immediate medical care
18. Seating arrangement in the pandals, food courts, shows etc. must ensure adequate physical distancing. Any shops, stalls, cafeteria etc., outside and within the premises too shall follow physical distancing norms at all times. Arrangements for safe drinking water, if required, should be made (preferably with provision for disposable cups/glasses) in the event premises
19. In religious places, touching of statues/idols / holy books etc. shall not be allowed. In view of potential threat of spread of infection, as far as feasible recorded devotional music/songs may be played and choir or singing groups should not be allowed.
20. In case of rallies and immersion processions the number of people should not exceed the prescribed limit and proper physical distancing and wearing of masks must be ensured. In any case, the number of such rallies and the distance covered by them may be kept within manageable limits.



Principal Secretary